

ANNUAL REPORT OF
THE DIOCESAN VOCATION COMMISSION
October 2008- September 2009

2008 – 2010 Committee Members

Rev. Benedict Lam, Diocesan Priest – Chairperson
Sr Louise Lam, FDCC – Executive Secretary
Rev. Bro. John Chong, FMS – Treasurer
Rev. Giles Chong, OCSO
Rev. Antonio Leung, SDB
Rev. Joseph Liu
Rev. Charlton Plateros, SVD
Rev. Deacon Joseph Sung
Sr Catherine Fung, FDCC
Sr Miriam Lui, SPB
Sr Lucia Mak, FMM
Sr Luigia Mindassi, PIME
Sr Cecilia Wong, LSP
Ms Clare S.S. Lai
Mr Patrick Chan

1. Project on Vocation Promotion

1.1 Annual Gathering for Members of Prayer Movement for Vocations

Date: 28 December 2008 - Saturday

Time: 3:00 p.m. – 5:00p.m

Venue: Holy Spirit Seminary

Participants: 80 Members of the Prayer Movement for Vocations,
three Elderly Inmates of St. Mary's Home for the Aged accompanied
by Sr Teresa Ma, 10 Parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish
accompanied by Fr Edward Chou, Fr Benedict Lam and
Sr Louise Lam.

Content: Heritage Tour, Rosary and Refreshment.

Evaluation: The members found that the heritage tour guided by Fr Benedict Lam
was enriching and, Fr Chau's sharing on his seminary life was
entertaining. On the whole, the members have benefited from this
meaningful visit.

1.2 DVC Website

To mark the "Year of Priestly Vocations", a new page (Icon) has been inserted
containing information and materials on Vocation and the schedules for this year.
The DVC blog is usually updated twice weekly, and even more frequently when
special issues arise. The month of September confirms the average number of
visitors per day at 120.

Evaluation: Young people who are searching for their vocations find the contents of DVC website and
blog enriching and enlightening.

1.3 Catholic Hotline Service

In spite of a decline in numbers of audiences, our commission considered worthwhile to continue this
service.

1.4 A Joint Venture with Kung Kao Po

To mark the Year of Priestly Vocations, DVC monthly publishes a series of cartoons on the Kung Kao Po to illustrate the meaning of Vocation. The first series has already been posted on the Weekly Paper and our Website since July 2009."

Evaluation: The use of cartoons to illustrate the meaning of Vocation is appealing to young people, and captures their attentions.

1.5 An Inter-Catholic Secondary School Day organized by Serra Club

Date: 15 November 2008.

Venue: St. Mary's Canossian College.

Time: 2:00p.m. – 5:00p.m.

Theme: "Do not fear, only believe"

Contents: Action Songs, Dance, Drama, Sharing by Priests and Religious Sisters.

Evaluation: Some of the Students were non-catholic, however they took part in the aforesaid activity energetically and were looking ahead to come again next time.

2.46th World Day of Prayer for Vocations on 3 May 2009

2.1 The theme of this activity was "A Joyful Journey"

2.2 Posters were distributed to all Parishes and Secondary Schools

2.3 Vocation Night

Date: 2 May 2009 - Saturday

Time: 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Venue: Caritas Community Hall

Guests: The Most Reverent Bishop John Tong, Rev. Dominic Chan, VG, Rev. Martin Yip (SDB), Sr Regina Ng (FMA), Ms. Ngan Lai Nor (Nor Chinese Dance Studio)

Souvenirs: (1) Silver Bookmarks engraved with Jesus' invitation:

"Follow me and I will make you fishers of men"(Mk 1:17).

(2) A card made in a shape of dvc Logo, with Promise to pray for vocations on one side and a prayer for vocations on the other side.

Participants: Approximately 250 people with Fr Benedict Lam, Sr Louise Lam, Bro J. Chong, Fr G. Chong, Fr A. Leung, Fr Charlton Plateros, Sr L. Mak, Sr M. Lui, Sr C. Fung, Sr C. Wong, and Ms C. Lai.

Content: (1) An opening address by Rev. B. Lam.

(2) Violin played by The Most Reverent J. Tong as a prelude to "A joyful Journey"

(3) The opening Hymn was "The Call of Jesus" presented in a Liturgical Dance

(4) Sharing of the Vocation Journey with songs and music by Rev. Martin Yip and Sr R. Ng

(5) Meditation guided by Re. D. Chan, VG

(6) The closing Hymn was "Our response to the Call" expressed in a Liturgical Dance

Evaluation: The prayerful atmosphere and the lively sharing of Rev. Martin Yip and Sr R. Ng were very much appreciated by the youths that composed of the majority of the participants. Some were amazed with the creative way of praying in the liturgical dance, while few of them found it distracting!

3. Prayer for Vocations

3.1 Theme: "Searching for the Meaning of Life "

Date: 29 November 2008 – Saturday

Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Venue: St. Stephen's Parish

Guest: Rev. Bro. Stephen Law, SJ.

Content: Sharing by Bro. Stephen Law followed by Taize prayer

Participants: Approximately 40 with Fr Benedict Lam, Sr Louise Lam, Sr Luigia Mindassi. Sr M. Lui and Sr C. Wong.

Evaluation: In spite of a small number of participants, the atmosphere was friendly and prayerful. The young people were moved by Bro Law's sincere and truthful sharing, through which they learned more about the meaning of vocation.

3.2 Theme: "A New Horizon"

Date: 21 February 2009 – Saturday

Time: 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room of Sacred Heart Canossian College of Commerce

Guest: Rev. Michele Camastra (PIME)

Content: Sharing by Rev. Michele Camastra followed by Taize Prayer.

Participants: 70 with Fr Benedict Lam, Sr Louise Lam, Bro. J. Chong, Rev. J. Liu and Rev Deacon Sung.

Evaluation: The majority of the participants were young people from various parishes, they found that Fr Michele's sharing was inspiring, through which they have learned the importance of seeking advice from a spiritual director in vocation discernment. Some of them were also impressed by the good team spirit and unity of heart demonstrated by the DVC youth group.

4. Activities for the Year of Priestly Vocations

4.1 Mass for Vocations

To mark the year of priestly vocations, the DVC has invited Rev. D. Chan, V.G., Rev. John Kwan, Rev. Thomas Law, Rev. John Tsang and Rev. Joseph Yim to preside over a mass for vocations, since they were also celebrating their 30th anniversary of ordination in June.

Date: 29 June 2009 - Monday

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Venue: Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Participants: Over a thousand people

Evaluation: The participants were very much impressed by the jolly witness of these five unique and lovable priests. The presence of their families together with the concelebrants which were Bishop Tong, Cardinal Zen and their fellow priests created a family-like, joyful and prayerful atmosphere. The essence of consecrated life was explicitly seen in brothers and sisters dwelling in unity.

4.2 Vocation Gathering

Date: 30 August 2009 (Sunday)

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Venue: Resurrection Parish (Kwun Tong)

Participants: Approximately over 70 Youth and Religious Sisters with Fr Gutierrez Carrejo, Fr Benedict Lam, Sr Louise Lam, Sr Miriam Lui and Sr Catherine Fung.

Souvenirs: Bookmarks (With questions for reflections based on the Calls of Abraham and Ruth)

Contents: Sunday Mass; Games; Lunch; Small Group Sharing; Exhibition and Taize Prayer.

Evaluation: The youth group preferred holding this kind of gathering on Sunday more than on Saturday. The overall running was smooth, and the exhibition was well presented. There is room for improvement in the presentation of the mass, physical environment and refreshment.

4.3 A Talk to the Parents

Date: 18 September 2009 (Friday)

Time: 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Venue: Holy Family Parish (Choi Hung Estate)

Guests: Rev. Giovanni Giampietro (PIME) and Antonio Wong (Seminarist)

Participants: 50 with Fr Benedict Lam, Sr Louise Lam and Sr Catherine Fung

Evaluation: Fr Giampietro has emphasized that the “Family is the cradle for Vocations”, this was also affirmed by the seminarist’s witnessing. Participants commented that their sharing was touching and enlightening, but the question time was insufficient.

5. Prayer Meeting for Vocation Discernment

5.1 The Monthly Prayer Meeting for boys

One boy has entered the Holy Spirit Seminary in August 2009, three new ones have joined this group; at present, Seven boys attend the monthly prayer meeting guided by Fr Pierre Lam and Sr Louise Lam.

Also one boy from Fr Benedict Lam’s group has joined the Holy Spirit Seminary in August 2009, and the remaining five will continue their discernment with Fr B. Lam.

5.2 Monthly Prayer Meeting for girls

One girl has started the “Come and See” experience with a religious institute, one quitted this group; the remaining four together with two new comers will continue their discernment with Sr Louise Lam.

Evaluation: The Spiritual Direction and Vocation Accompaniment are essential and crucial for Vocation discernment. Both boys and girls feel being supported and encouraged by their companions (peers and directors) on their vocation journey and have benefited from the spiritual guidance from the directors and faith sharing from their peers.

6. Outreach Activities

6.1 Annual Formation Day for Diocesan Priests

Rev. Dominic Chan, VG, invited the DVC members to attend the Formation Day for diocesan Priests on 8 January 2009. Fr Benedict Lam, Fr Antonio Leung and Sr Louise Lam represented the DVC to introduce the Vocation Promotion Projects to the assembly and all members participated in the group discussion in the afternoon. The responses were positive.

6.2 Diocesan Permanent Diaconate Monthly Meeting

Sr Louise Lam was invited to share about “Vocation Promotion” with the deacons at their monthly meeting in March 2009. It was a good opportunity for mutual sharing and support.

6.3 Meeting with Various Diocesan Departments

Fr Benedict Lam and Sr Louise Lam were invited by Rev. Dominic Chan, VG to present the proposal for the year of priestly vocations (see appendix) on:

- 3.12.2008 to The Council of Priests
- 4.12.2008 to The Diocesan Pastoral Council
- 11.5.2009 to The Steering Group on Cooperation between Caritas and Parishes
- 15.6.2009 to The Representatives of The Catholic Education Bureau
- 30.7.2009 to The Diocesan Representatives for the year of Priestly Vocations

These were good opportunities for mutual supports and sharing of insights in vocation promotion.

6.4 Talk at Francis Hsu Catholic College

Sr Louise Lam was invited to deliver a “Religious Talk” to the first year students of the aforesaid college. Only a few Christian students out of 100 were present, the purpose of vocation promotion was not attained, so this might be discontinued next year!

Appendix 1

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Revised Proposal for the Celebration of “The Year of Priestly Vocations 2009-2010”
to the Diocese of Hong Kong

“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”(Lk 10:2) **Jesus’ appeal for “Prayer for Vocations”** is a crucial way in resolving vocations crisis in this present time. Vocation is a gift from God; it is Jesus who has chosen us not that we have chosen him (Jn 15:16). The Diocesan Vocation Commission (DVC) therefore would recommend all Parishes in H.K. to emphasize **“Prayer for Vocations”** as a **“Top Priority”** above all other activities to be scheduled **for “The Year of Priestly Vocations 2009-2010”**.

To sensitize all Catholics of H.K. in the celebration of the year of priestly vocations, the following suggestions are for your reference:

1. Prerequisite - Individual study of the following reports: “The Vocation and Continuous Formation of the Diocesan Priests”, “Marriage and Family Pastoral Care” and ”Youth and Young Teenage Pastoral Care”.
2. Renewing Parish Groups – To implement the proposals of the Diocesan Synod, all Parishes are recommended to set up a Vocation Promotion Team (2002 Diocesan Synod Document pg. 74 & 76 CIX; pg.259, 3.1.9) and a Parochial Pastoral Committee for the Family (abbr. PPCF, 2002 Diocesan Synod Document pg.203):
 - 2.1 To form a Vocation Promotion Team with 6-8 members: their role is to invite all Catholics to pray for vocations at regular meetings and to join the Diocesan Vocation Commission’s “Prayer Movement for Vocations”. This Team should try to recommend at least one young person yearly for vocation discernment with the Parish Priest concerned.
 - 2.2 To form regular Youth Gathering on every first Thursday praying for vocations, with the aim to empower the youth with the sense of mission to pray for vocations. The target groups are the Altar Boys and the Legion of Mary guided by a Spiritual Director.
 - 2.3 To encouraged the PPCF or appoint 2-3 Families to pray for vocations in the home, aiming at increasing their children’s knowledge of vocations and their awareness of their vocations in an informal setting.
3. Vocation Activities – The aim is to bring to the awareness of all Catholics- Young and Old alike that “Promoting Vocations is Everybody’s Concern”
Pilgrimages for Vocations at Deanery Level - Visits to Holy Spirit Seminary or Men’s & Women’s Religious Institutes with an intention to pray for vocations.
 - 3.1 Interviewing Priest, Religious Brothers and Sisters regarding their vocation journey and publish their vocation stories on the parish newsletters (named as “Star of the Month”, please refer to 4. 2).
 - 3.2 Vocation Exhibitions at Deanery Level – Invite Religious Institutes within the Deanery to coordinate Exhibitions with the aim to increase the awareness of the urgent needs for vocation promotion and make known the essence of Consecrated life and Priesthood to the faithful.
 - 3.3 Open day organized by Men’s & Women Religious Institutes during their Anniversary Celebrations.
 - 3.4 Joint Venture between DVC and Diocesan Youth Commission in organizing “Youth Formation Activities”.
 - 3.5 Each Deanery should try to organize a “Vocation Promotion Camp” at least once within 2009-2010.

4. Vocation Formation – Helping parents and children alike to appreciate the beauty and meaning of Married Life, Consecrated Life and Single Life.
 - 4.1 Formation programs for parents
 - 4.2 Formation programs for youths
 - 4.3 Vocation magazines, books, CDs and VCDs

5. Vocation Promotion – “Promoting Vocations is Everybody’s Concern”
 - 5.1 Every effort should be made by Parish Priests to encourage all parishioners especially the young to support all kinds of vocation promotion activities organized by the DVC.

 - 5.2 “Star of the Month” - Publishing the Vocation Stories shared by Priests, Religious Brothers and Sisters on the Kung Kao Po.

 - 5.3 Sharing the jubilarians’ Charisms when Celebrating Jubilees.

 - 5.4 Each Priest engaged in “Pastoral Ministry” should try to encourage at least one young person for vocation discernment within 2009-2010 (2002 Diocesan Synod Document pg.259).

Appendix 3

Vocation Activities scheduled for the Year of Priestly Vocations: 7/2009 to 12/2009

Date	Time	Activities	Venue	Organizers
29 June – Monday	8:00p.m.	Mass for Vocations	Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception	Diocesan Vocation Commission (DVC)
30 August – Sunday	10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Sunday Mass Games & Lunch Heart-to-heart Dialogue Exhibition/Taize Prayer	Resurrection Parish (Kwun Tong)	Joint venture between DVC and East Kowloon Deanery
18 September - Friday	8:00p.m. to 9:00p.m.	A Talk to Parents by Rev.Giampietro (PIME)	Holy Family Parish	Diocesan Vocation Commission
1 October - Thursday	9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.	Vocation Animation Seminar	Holy Spirit Seminary	Diocesan Vocation Commission
29 November - Sunday	10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Sunday Mass Games & Lunch Heart-to-heart Dialogue Exhibition/Taize Prayer	Ss. Peter & Paul Parish (Yuen Long)	Joint venture between DVC and North-West New Territories Deanery
31 December 2009 - 2 January 2010	4:00p.m. to 2:00p.m.	Vocation Formation Camp	Holy Spirit Seminary	Diocesan Vocation Commission